

542 minutes later— Wanderers crack

Hillingdon Borough 1, Wycombe Wanderers 0

WYCOMBE WANDERERS' defensive network gave way for the first time since they conceded a 36th-minute own-goal against Dulwich Hamlet on September 30 (542 playing minutes before), when Hillingdon's young crackshot John Bishop scored the Premier Floodlight League winner at Leas Stadium on Monday evening.

Borough's number ten unleashed a ferocious 25 yarder that went soaring to the right, with deputy goalkeeper Kevin O'Brien, diving in vain hope of an impossible save, after 38 minutes.

But he should never have been allowed the chance for Charlie Gale had a clear moment to slam the ball away from the danger spot.

NOT HIS NIGHT

It wasn't exactly Charlie's night. Six minutes later, he upended former League professional, Seth Vafiadis, as the right-winger darted into the Wycombe 'box'.

Vafiadis took the spot kick himself, but a brilliant save, with O'Brien in full flight, brought the ball to ground, and the keeper recovered quicker than the forward could follow up.

A win perhaps slightly exaggerated the Southern League leaders' role in the game. At present they also lie an impressive top of their section of the Premier Floodlight League.

Yet Borough, without injured goal-grabber, Johnny Cozens, and with Vafiadis seemingly out of touch, and Gary Townsend rambling around ineffectually at centre-forward, were finding Vince Faulkner a determined centre-half barrier.

Wanderers tried out surprise newcomer, Johnny Bucke, formerly of Wembley and Hounslow, in the number nine shirt, while John Goulson, ex-Loughborough College mid-field man, came on as sub. for his one-time University team mate, Ken Ward in the 35th minute.

PERSISTENT

Ward, feeling the effects of his persistent ankle injury, went down under a strong tackle, and is still worried about the injury.

On the whole Bucke fared no better than Keith Searle had done a fortnight earlier at Hayes under similar circumstances.

Nonetheless it was his return appearance after a month's injury, and on former form with Wembley he can't help but give another boost to Wanderers' forward line.

Question is, with Searle and Bucke, both on form, neither could be reasonably omitted. So there's room for interesting speculation when the situation arises, as to who is for the drop.

With Viv Busby, becoming accustomed to the contact lenses he had acquired that same day, Barry Baker 'risked it' to play just 48 hours before his Berks and Bucks F.A. appearance. And, thankfully, he rose at least half-way above his disastrous form of last Saturday against Hitchin.

Otherwise, those involved in Wednesday night's match stood down en bloc, making room for the second wave.

FLYING HIGHER

Of these, Dave Thomas came out with colours flying highest after 90 steady minutes, in which Hillingdon could not make much headway down the wing under his care.

Keith Stephenson, a present regular, made several good interceptions, doing particularly well to run the roving Folan off the ball as the number three headed through the Wycombe defence in the 69th minute.

A minute later, Hillingdon bundled the ball over Wanderers' line, but referee, Mr. G. Keeble (Burnham) ruled no goal for an infringement on O'Brien.

Wycombe: O'Brien; Thomas, Gale; Stephenson, Faulkner, Ward (sub. Goulson); Worley, Samuels, Bucke, Baker, Anthony.